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Contact: Erin Rath/Jeff Turcotte

**SENATOR GREGG CONTINUES TO SHEPARD
“RURAL AREA” WAIVER FOR BERLIN’S WASTEWATER
TREATMENT PLANT UPGRADES**

WASHINGTON – U.S. Senator Judd Gregg (R-NH) today announced that he has included a provision in the Fiscal Year 2004 Agriculture Appropriations bill that will allow the City of Berlin to be considered by the Rural Development Administration as a rural area, allowing the City to apply for funds for the City’s much needed \$8.5 million wastewater treatment facility upgrades. The Senate Appropriations Committee, of which Senator Gregg is a member, passed the Agriculture Appropriations bill earlier today. The bill is now ready for consideration from the entire Senate.

Senator Gregg stated, “Berlin’s 20-year old wastewater treatment facility is in need of upgrades. Unfortunately, the tremendous cost of these upgrades, coupled with the region’s current economic challenges, make it difficult to adequately protect water quality and allow for economic growth. The inclusion of this waiver in the Senate Agriculture Appropriations measure will allow the City of Berlin to apply for federal funds to make upgrades in their wastewater treatment infrastructure. Such improvements are critical to the economic development and environmental well being of this rural community.”

Berlin Mayor Bob Danderson stated, “This is wonderful news. This is a great opportunity for us to continue applying for and hopefully receiving RDA grants which have been of great assistance to the City of Berlin financially in the past and hopefully will continue to be in the future. We are grateful for Senator Gregg’s help. We hope this waiver will allow us to gain access to funding particularly with respect to water and wastewater projects.”

A waiver is necessary since the City of Berlin exceeds the population cap for this grant program by 300 persons. Senator Gregg secured a similar waiver in the FY03 Omnibus Appropriations bill. The provision included in the FY04 bill will ensure that Berlin qualifies for the Rural Community Advancement Program through the 2010 census. Senator Gregg has secured \$8.5 million to help Berlin repair and replace water pipes throughout the city. The Senator also helped Berlin obtain a \$1 million Rural Development grant which went into the construction of the Lancaster Street Water Tank, benefitting residential and commercial drinking water, water pressure necessary for fire fighting and connection to the new Berlin State Prison.

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